



For Immediate Release
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Colorado River District Makes Discretionary Water Releases to Boost Flows in Colorado River

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, CO – Record low flows on stretches of the Colorado River have prompted the Colorado River Water Conservation District to make discretionary releases from Woford Mountain Reservoir to increase flows. The Upper Colorado River from Kremmling to Glenwood Springs supports a booming recreation economy based on commercial and private rafting, fishing guide services, and other water sports. Due to Xcel Energy's Shoshone Hydroelectric Power Plant being off-line for maintenance, flows normally sustained to meet the power plant's needs have dropped as upstream reservoirs have been able to store water that otherwise would have been used by the hydroelectric plant.

The Colorado River District will release 100 cubic feet per second (cfs) per day from its Woford Mountain Reservoir near Kremmling for up to 5 days, for a total of 1,000 acre-feet of water. By then, the flow in the Colorado River near Grand Junction should drop to the point to where senior agricultural water rights in the area will assert their "call" on the river. This group of senior water rights known as the "Cameo call" will require upstream reservoirs to release additional water into the Colorado River to meet their needs.

"Upstream reservoirs have benefited from the Shoshone plant being off-line by being able to store more water," said Dave Merritt, Chief Engineer at the Colorado River District. "With these low flows, it's time to give something back to the river."

Presently, the Colorado River from Kremmling through Glenwood Canyon is flowing at less than one-third of what would be expected in a typical year. The Colorado River near Kremmling was down to 311 cfs by the morning of July 8. Under normal conditions, the river would be flowing around 1,370cfs. East of Glenwood Canyon at Dotsero, the Colorado River's average flow of 2,800cfs was down to only 938 cfs.

The Colorado River District's release of water should be sufficient to keep the river navigable for the commercial rafting and outfitting operations that provide nearly \$25 million in economic benefits to the area. Reaches of the river designated as gold medal trout fishing habitat should benefit from the additional releases of reservoir water by preventing river temperatures from increasing any further and harming temperature-sensitive trout species.

Real-time streamflow information about the Colorado River can be accessed from the following links:

USGS Colorado River Gage near Kremmling -
waterdata.usgs.gov/co/nwis/uv/?site_no=09058000&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060

USGS Colorado River Gage near Dotsero -
waterdata.usgs.gov/co/nwis/uv/?site_no=09070500&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060

More information about other Colorado River Basin activities is available at www.crwcd.org.

The Colorado River Water Conservation District serves the residents of 15 West Slope counties, including Moffat, Routt, Rio Blanco, Grand, Eagle, Summit, Garfield, Mesa, Gunnison, Pitkin, Delta, Ouray and portions of Montrose, Saguache and Hinsdale counties. The Colorado River District was chartered in 1937 to protect and conserve the waters of the Colorado River Basin for beneficial uses.

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